

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-10 (Canceled)

Claim 11 (Currently Amended): A hard-drawn steel wire comprising:

C: 0.5 - 0.68 mass% (hereinafter, referred to as %),

Si: 1.0 1.2-1.95%,

Mn: 0.5-1.5%, and

Cr: 0.5-1.5%,

Fe and inevitable impurities,

said wire, which consists of at least one selected from the group consisting of ferrite and pearlite, further comprising 5 particles/100 μm^2 or less of carbides wherein the circle-equivalent diameters of the carbides are more than 0.1 μm .

Claim 12 (Previously Presented): The steel wire according to claim 11, further comprising 0.05-0.5% of Ni.

Claim 13 (Previously Presented): The steel wire according to claim 11, further comprising 0.3% or less (excluding 0%) of Mo.

Claim 14 (Previously Presented): The steel wire according to claim 12, further comprising 0.3% or less (excluding 0%) of Mo.

Claims 15-42 (Canceled)

Claim 43 (Previously Presented): The steel wire according to claim 11, said wire comprising 2 particles/ $100\mu\text{m}^2$ or less of carbides wherein the circle-equivalent diameters of the carbides are more than $0.1\mu\text{m}$.

Claim 44 (Previously Presented): The steel wire according to claim 43, further comprising 0.05-0.5% of Ni.

Claim 45 (Previously Presented): The steel wire according to claim 43, further comprising 0.3% or less (excluding 0%) of Mo.

Claim 46 (Previously Presented): The steel wire according to claim 44, further comprising 0.3% or less (excluding 0%) of Mo.

Claim 47 (Canceled)

Claim 48 (Previously Presented): The steel wire according to claim 11 for use in a hard-drawn spring.

Claim 49 (Previously Presented): The steel wire according to claim 11, wherein the carbides are formed by subjecting a steel rod to a hot-rolling treatment comprising heating at 1100°C or more and cooling to a range of 400 to 600°C at a cooling rate of 5 to 10°C/sec .

Claim 50 (Previously Presented): The steel wire according to claim 49, wherein the carbides are formed by subjecting the steel rod, after the hot-rolling treatment, to a patenting treatment comprising austenitizing at a temperature of 880 to 950°C for a holding time of 50 seconds or longer and isothermally transforming at a temperature of 550 to 650°C.